

Argyll and Bute Council Equalities Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes 2021

April 2021

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Section 1: Background context

1.1 Public Authorities covered by this Mainstreaming Report

Argyll and Bute Council's Equalities Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes 2021 covers the following listed authorities:

- Argyll and Bute Council
- Argyll and Bute Education Authority
- Argyll and Bute Licensing Board.

1.2 Legislation

The Equality Act (2010) brought together for the first time legislation relating to the nine protected characteristics of race, disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, religion and belief, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity.

The Act requires public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 and subsequent amendments are designed to help public sector organisations meet their duties as set out in the Equality Act.

The requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty include:

- Report on mainstreaming equality.
- Publish equality outcomes and report on progress.
- Assess and review policies and practices.
- Gather and use employee information.
- Publish gender pay gap information.
- Publish statements on equal pay.

This mainstreaming report describes how the three public authorities it covers have been making progress in these areas.

That inequality of opportunities is not only an issue for people with protected characteristics is reflected in other legislation, including:

- Part 1 of the Equality Act (2010), commonly referred to as the **Fairer Scotland Duty**, which seeks to tackle socio-economic disadvantage and reduce inequalities of outcome.
- Island (Scotland) Act (2018).

1.3 Mainstreaming Equality within Argyll and Bute

Mainstreaming equality means integrating equality into an organisation's day-to-day working. This means taking equality into account when acting as an employer, or planning and providing services.

1.4 Key Documents

Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan and the Council's Corporate Plan

Argyll and Bute Council and Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership share a set of common outcomes. These are articulated in the Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan (ABOIP) (available https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/aboip_v1_2018.pdf) and the council's corporate plan (available at https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/corporate_plan_with_council_priorities.pdf).

The Community Planning Partnership makes explicit its commitment to equalities within the ABOIP (p26).

In addition to having Corporate Outcomes, the council also has a suite of Business Outcomes. These sit beneath, and feed into, the Corporate Outcomes. The Council sees equalities as a cross-cutting issue, relevant across all outcomes (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Argyll and Bute Council’s Corporate and Business Outcomes

(Source: Argyll and Bute Corporate Plan, 2018-2022)

Joint Over-arching Vision	Argyll and Bute’s Economic Success is built on a growing population						
Council Mission	Making Argyll and Bute a place people choose to Live, Learn, Work and do Business						
	Choose Argyll, Love Argyll						
	A Place people choose to Live			A Place people choose to Learn	A Place people choose to Work and Do Business		Getting It Right
Corporate Outcomes	People live active healthier and independent lives	People will live in safer and stronger communities	Children and young people have the best possible start	Education, Skills and training maximise opportunities for all	Our economy is diverse and thriving	We have an infrastructure that supports sustainable growth	
Business Outcomes	We Ensure Information And Support Is Available For Everyone	Our Communities Are Protected And Supported	Our Looked After Young People Are Supported By Effective Corporate Parenting	All Our Children And Young People Are Supported To Realise Their Potential.	We Support Businesses, Employment And Development Opportunities	Our Infrastructure Is Safe And Fit For The Future	We Are Efficient And Cost Effective
	We Provide Support, Prevention And Opportunities To Help People Make Better Lifestyle Choices	Our Natural And Built Environment Is Protected And Respected	The Support And Lifestyle Needs Of Our Children, Young People, And Their Families Are Met.	All Our Adults Are Supported To Realise Their Potential	We Influence And Engage With Businesses and Policy Makers	Our Communities Are Cleaner And Greener	We Engage And Work With Our Customers, Staff And Partners
	We Enable A Choice Of Suitable Housing Options				Argyll & Bute Is Promoted To Everyone		We Encourage Creativity And Innovation To Ensure Our Workforce Is Fit For The Future
CROSS-CUTTING	Socio-Economic Duty, Equalities, Gaelic						
OUR VALUES	Caring, Committed, Collaborative & Creative Cùramach, Dealasach, Cruthachail agus Com-pàirteach						

The Council's Constitution

The Council's Constitution ([Council Constitution \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](http://argyll-bute.gov.uk)):

- Sets out the council's commitment with regard to human rights (part A, page 8).
- Sets out the Council's requirement that contracts awarded by the Council contain an obligation obliging contractors to comply with all duties arising from the Equality Act 2010 (Part E, 12).
- States that determination and implementation of policies in relation to the promotion of equality of opportunity fall within the remit of the Policy and Resources Committee (Part C, 2.2.4).

Employee Code of Conduct

Section 3.18 of the Employee Code of Conduct deals specifically with Equality and Diversity. It sets out the council's commitment to equalities and signposts readers to the council's Equality and Diversity Policy, Equalities Mainstreaming Report, and Dignity at Work Policy. Paragraph 3.18.4 states:

The Council will promote an ethos in which self-respect and respect for others are of the utmost importance. All individuals will be valued equally and therefore be given every opportunity to fulfil their maximum potential in society. The Council insists that those who suffer discrimination, whether direct or indirect, receive fair treatment and adequate remedies and affirms that it will address appropriately all sources of discrimination.

Paragraph 3.18.5 makes clear that 'any instances of discrimination, harassment or victimisation at work will be viewed as a serious matter'.

The Employee Code of conduct is available to all networked staff on the Council's intranet. It is also appended to the Council's Constitution (as Part F).

Equality and Diversity Policy

The purpose of the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy is to make sure that the organisation, employees and elected Members do not unlawfully discriminate against people with protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act. It also ensures that we oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination, and ensures equality, fairness and respect for all in the council's employment. The Equality and Diversity Policy (available here: [equality and diversity policy approved 002.pdf \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](#)) makes links to other relevant documents and resources:

- Manager's Guide to Recruitment and Selection
- Dignity at Work Policy: Eliminating Workplace Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure
- Disciplinary Procedures and Code of Practice
- Grievance Procedure

- Employee Code of Conduct
- Code of Conduct for Councillors
- Guidance on the Councillors' Code of Conduct
- Advice Note for Councillors on Bullying and Harassment:
- Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment
- Phased Return to Work and Other Reasonable Adjustments: Manager's Guide

Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessments

The council has a process in place for carrying out Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessments (EqSEIA). The EqSEIA is a joint impact assessment, which takes into account the nine protected characteristics, as well as socio-economic disadvantage and the needs of island communities.

The Council's decision, in 2018, to create of a joint impact assessment process reflects changes in legislation relating to the Fairer Scotland Duty and islands.

Part 1 of the Equality Act (2010) was enacted by Scottish Government in late 2017, and came into force on 1 April 2018. Although in the legislation Part 1 is referred to as the Socio-Economic Duty, it is more commonly referred to as the **Fairer Scotland Duty**. The Fairer Scotland Duty seeks to tackle socio-economic disadvantage and reduce inequalities of outcome.

In addition, we have a duty, which is set out in the Island (Scotland) Act (2018), to consider the impact of proposals on island communities.

The EqSEIA incorporates consideration of both the Fairer Scotland Duty and impacts on our island communities within the wider impact assessment process.

Work is currently underway to look at how the EqSEIA process can be amended to incorporate Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessments serve the following purposes:

- They help the officers who are designing new proposals to check that they have considered all equalities implications, including socio-economic inequalities, as well as impacts on island communities.
- They help to demonstrate that officers have considered all equalities implications, including socio-economic inequalities, as well as impacts on island communities.
- They help people who are interested in equalities, socio-economic inequalities, and island impacts to see that these have been considered, and how.
- They encourage better / more informed consultation around proposals while they are still in development
- They enable better scrutiny around decision making as issues around equalities and socio-economic inequalities are made more transparent.

In addition to carrying out impact assessments for individual proposals, we have embedded the practice of producing a joint impact assessment to show the combined

impact of savings proposals submitted as part of the council's budget setting processes. To date, we have carried out combined impact assessments in respect of budgets set in 2019, 2020 and 2021.

Procurement

Section 4.2 of the Council's *Procurement Strategy* [Procurement Strategy and Sustainable Procurement Policy \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](#) states:

The Council is mindful that the impact of procurement is far greater than this definition of a 'process' and our vision, objectives and principles as set out in this strategy illustrate the contribution that effective procurement arrangements can make to wide ranging socio-economic agendas. These include equality and diversity, a successful local economy, a thriving voluntary and third sector, environmental issues and value for money for Argyll and Bute residents.

Section 5.1 includes the following commitments:

Ensuring procurement activity contributes towards the Council's general Equality Duty towards all stakeholders in Argyll and Bute and beyond;

Continuing to promote sustainability, fair work practices and the importance of equality and equal treatment through procurement.

Section 5.3 sets out key priorities for regulated procurements for 2021/22. Priority 5 relates to 'Complying with the statutory requirements on the payment of a living wage to persons involved in producing, providing or constructing the subject matter of regulated procurements', which will contribute 'towards improving the social wellbeing element - in particular, reducing inequality in Argyll and Bute...'

Argyll and Bute's *Sustainable Procurement Policy 2021/22* [Procurement Strategy and Sustainable Procurement Policy \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](#) also makes reference towards equalities, including the following:

d) In relation to social considerations, our priorities will be:

- To ensure there is no intentional discrimination against specific groups of people when undertaking procurements - Equalities and Diversity considerations will be embedded throughout the procurement process;
- To ensure that our contract terms require suppliers to support the health, safety, welfare and rights of their employees and supply chain – ensuring that the Council does not support human trafficking or modern slavery.

1.5 Learning and Development Activity

All staff are required to complete equalities training. Following an initial programme, where training was made available on a face-to-face basis to all staff, mandatory training is now available through our online e-learning platform, LEON.

Equality and Diversity training is mandatory for all staff.

The council's e-learning course is mandatory for all networked staff and should be completed as part of induction.

To ensure that non-networked staff also receive equality and diversity training, we have rolled out training to manual workers. This has been delivered in a variety of ways. A digital toolbox talk was developed (a video) which was used for the majority of staff groups; however, to supplement that, a guidance document was created for staff groups such as school transport drivers where a video format was not suitable.

At time of writing, we are making our e-learning equality training available to community groups within our area.

In addition to the mandatory training, a number of additional e-learning courses are available to enable learners to get a deeper understanding of the individual protected characteristics. We also offer courses relating to 'Autism Spectrum Disorder Basic Awareness' and 'Unconscious Bias'.

Equalities is a standing item on the agenda of the regular meetings held by the council's Training Centre; these meetings involve all people who are involved in the delivery of training.

1.6 Workforce

The Council approved its Strategic Workforce Plan (2018-2022) in April 2018 (<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s125859/Strategic%20Workforce%20Plan%20Final%20version%20for%20Council%20April%202018.pdf>). The Strategic Workforce Plan sets out the council's approach to ensuring that we have a workforce for the future.

Workforce planning requires that we understand the current profile of our workforce and identifies how we can make sure that it will meet the future needs of the organisation. Key outcomes of the workforce plan include ensuring that we have a balance between younger and older employees, and that the health and wellbeing of our employees is supported.

Workforce planning meetings are held twice a year, during which HR Talent Management and Third Tier managers discuss the make-up of the workforce. Ahead of these workforce planning meetings, Services are provided with a dashboard that shows the profile of their workforce. Because we have an ageing workforce, age is a key area of focus. Gender is discussed when there is an uneven gender balance within the team.

In areas such as early years which is a predominately female workforce, we try and work with managers to do some active promotion to attract males into the workforce. Where there is a gender imbalance, managers are encouraged to identify actions to address this.

As of April 2021, the Council has consolidated the living wage into its pay and grading structure. At the same time preparation was carried out for this consolidation, the Council took the opportunity to review its Terms and Conditions of employment.

The consolidation of the Living Wage was subject to checking via an Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment and an Independent Equalities Review by an independent expert.

1.7 Partnership working

In addition to the Council's commitment to equalities as set out in the ABOIP, the Council has also developed close relationships with individual Community Planning partners. Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue, and the NHS / Argyll and Bute HSCP are all represented on the Council's Equality Forum. Other Community Planning Partners are also invited to attend Forum meetings.

The HSCP has adopted the Council's approach to Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessments, thereby bringing Council and HSCP processes into closer alignment.

1.8 Equality Forum

The council's Equality Forum was set up in 2013, with the Terms of Reference for the forum subsequently being reviewed and updated in early 2018.

The purpose of the Equality Forum is to enable issues relating to equalities to be raised. In turn, the forum helps Argyll and Bute Council to deliver its obligations as set out in the Equality Act (2010).

Meetings are scheduled to take place quarterly. However, members of the Equality Forum may use the forum as a 'sounding board' at any time, with such communications may take place outwith the formal meeting cycle.

Membership of the Equality Forum is drawn from across council Services, enabling better coordination and collaboration. Additionally, Community Planning Partners joined the Forum in 2018. This is enabling the sharing of good practice between partners (e.g. HSCP adopted/adapted the council's Equality and Socio-economic Impact Assessment (EqSEIA); there is commitment to sharing information / data to enable better evidence use in EqSEIAs.

Partnership work is ongoing to see whether NHS Highland, the HSCP, and Argyll and Bute Council can bring our Equalities Outcomes into closer alignment.

The Equality Forum has continued to meet during the COVID pandemic, with meetings carried out online.

1.9 Other groups and representation

Other groups that deal with aspects of equality and fairness include:

- Financial Inclusion and Advice Group (formerly Welfare Reform Group)
- The Argyll Islands Strategic Group (AISG)
- HR Board
- TU Liaison Group
- Strategic and Departmental Management Team meetings.

Equalities falls into the remit of the elected member Policy Lead for Corporate Services. Inequalities and poverty fall within the remit of the Policy Lead for Housing, Islands and Gaelic, who co-chairs both the Financial Inclusion and Advice Group and chairs the Argyll Islands Strategic Group.

The terms of reference for the Council's Financial Inclusion and Advice Group were agreed in May 2019. Membership is drawn from elected members, council officers and partners. The work of the FIAG (and its predecessor, the Welfare Reform Group) covers and takes account of the **Fairer Scotland Duty**.

Much of the work relating to socio-economic disadvantage within Argyll and Bute has been managed through the council's anti-poverty strategy.

1.10 Feedback from Audit Scotland – BVAR

Audit Scotland published its Best Value Assurance Report for Argyll and Bute Council on 21 May 2020. With regard to equalities, Audit Scotland made the following observations:

The council has demonstrated a commitment to incorporating equalities throughout its work and demonstrates clear examples of good practice

60. There is clear evidence of strategic collaborative working between the council and third sector organisations. External partners' participation in the Equality Forum facilitates the continuous sharing of good practice and allows various groups to be better represented.

61. The council has a comprehensive process for carrying out equality impact assessments on how projects or service changes affect those with protected characteristics. The impact assessments incorporate the Islands Act and the Fairer Scotland Duty Act and have been shown to genuinely affect final decisions where there is an impact on equalities. This practice has recently been shared with the Scottish Government and the Improvement Service as an example of good practice.

62. The council has addressed concerns raised by Audit Scotland during work on the 2018/19 annual audit about the quality of its equalities training materials for staff. The council has developed its training materials and has rolled out mandatory equalities training for all staff, including staff without access to the IT network.

63. The council has commitment from its members and senior officers to continue the headway it has made in equalities. The council is aware of barriers to equal opportunities and takes steps to address these. The council values diversity in its workforce and takes steps to provide equality of opportunity for all staff.

[\(Audit Scotland, 2020, p29\)](#)

Section 2: Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

In the last four years, we have carried out a programme of work to review and improve our activities relating to equalities.

Progress made has been reflected in feedback from Audit Scotland (see section 1.10).

Specific areas of activity are outlined below.

2.1 Living Wage

As of 1 April, 2021 the living wage supplement has been consolidated into Argyll and Bute's pay and grading structure. The work carried out to enable this was subject to an equality impact assessment process carried out by an external consultant.

2.2 Review of our Equality Impact Assessment process

The council has carried out Equality Impact Assessments for a number of years. Equality and Diversity Impacts were first developed and approved in the 2000s. These were subsequently updated in light of the Equality Act (2010) and an updated EqIA was approved by council in December 2012.

In light of changes to legislation, as well as a review of how effectively the previous EqIA was being used, the council's EqIA process was reviewed and updated again, in 2018. This review has resulted in the Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (EqSEIA) process (see <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/equality-legislation-and-reporting>).

The EqSEIA process was reviewed in autumn 2019, after twelve months of implementation. Based on that review, the guidance was amended to make clearer when an EqSEIA should be carried out.

The EqSEIA will be reviewed again to ensure that they continue to be fit for purpose in light of:

- Changes to the legislative environment, notably the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill, and the requirement to carry out Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments;
- Guidance from Scottish Government with regards Islands Communities Impact Assessments;
- The publication of the final guidance relating to the Fairer Scotland Duty.

2.3 Disability Confident accreditation

The Council reaccredited as a Disability Confident Employer in autumn 2018.

As the current accreditation period expires on 24 September 2021, the council is committed to renewing the accreditation later this year.

2.4 Improvements to Website Accessibility

Considerable work has been done to ensure the Website's Accessibility Standards have been improved to ensure we conform to *the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018* that required compliance by Sept 2020. In parallel our SOCITM Silktide Accessibility rating has risen from 46 to 97 (out of 100) in less than a year.

In 2020/21, we have renewed our contract with BrowseAloud, which provides additional web support such as reading aloud of web pages for those with sight related issues and enhanced translation capability for users.

(See also section 4.1.)

2.5 Review of workforce data

In 2018, we reviewed the equalities-related data we hold for our workforce. We have also reviewed the data collected by Talentlink, our recruitment portal. This highlighted a number of issues relating to the quality and consistency of the monitoring data available to us.

We continue to engage with COSLA and SPDS with regard to improvement of equal opportunities data in Talentlink; this improvement work is being advanced through Society of Personnel & Development Scotland.

2.6 Awareness raising

The council undertakes a range of awareness raising activities within and without the authority, throughout the year. Examples of activity include the following.

The Council's communications team uses social media to raise awareness. Such awareness raising activity may highlight:

- resources / services provided by the Council;
- resources provided by, or campaigns run by, others (e.g. Scottish Government's campaign (#CSEthesigns) around child sexual exploitation; Parent Club Scotland's 'Wellbeing for Wee Ones' campaign;
- particular occasions (e.g. International Women's Day; National Care Day).

The Council's Wellbeing Team produces a weekly 'newsletter', which is promoted by email to all networked staff and hosted on the council's external website. As well as providing advice to promote employees' physical and mental wellbeing, the newsletters also highlight various issues. To date, these have included:

- Children's Mental Health Week;
- LGBT+ history month;
- International STAND UP to Bullying Day;
- Eating Disorders Awareness Week;
- Menopause in the workplace;
- World Autism Awareness Day.

At time of writing, the Wellbeing Team's awareness raising activities have been planned through to the end of 2021.

The Council's Chief Executive hosts a regular podcast, available through the Council's website ([Pippa's Podcast \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/pippas-podcast)). Episodes have focused on:

- International Women's Week;
- 16 days of activism against gender-based violence.

Additionally, individual schools may carry out awareness raising activities.

2.7 Domestic Abuse Policy

Argyll and Bute Council approved its Domestic Abuse Policy on 26 November, 2020.

This policy provides specific guidance and support for those affected by domestic abuse, who are predominantly female, but also includes guidance for men affected by this issue as well as those in same-sex relationships/transgender.

Section 3: COVID

The situation with regard to the pandemic has been fast moving and fluid, and is still ongoing. Changes to service delivery have had to be made at short notice, and evolve as the pandemic progresses. As a result, plans made for recovery in summer 2020 and since have been, and continue to be, subject to monitoring and revision (e.g. Education's recovery plan, see below).

Responses to the COVID situation had to be put in place at short notice. As a result, EqSEIAs have not always been carried out in a timely way. We recognise that this is an area for improvement, and we are reviewing our practices for lessons learned.

Nonetheless, changes to service delivery have taken into account the needs of service users, as the examples below demonstrate.

Supporting people during the COVID pandemic

Communications

The Council put in place a number of measures to ensure good communication during COVID. These have included:

- A menu on the front page of the Council's website dedicated to COVID, signposting people to information and resources. Among others, these include the Coronavirus helpline and Flexible Food Fund. The signposting also links to information about volunteering and support for communities.
- Coronavirus helpline: the Council can be accessed via telephone or online form. The council enables people with no other means of support to access assistance if they have been contacted through Test and Protect and asked to self-isolate.
- Proactively calling all people shielding to ensure that they received the support they needed.
- Notices through social media to raise awareness of restrictions as well as support available, both to individuals and to businesses.
- Targeting information through other channels, e.g. via food banks.
- Via Community Planning: outreach to equalities groups during pandemic recovery/ resilience consultation to gain the views of those most negatively impacted.
- Provision of digital support to community groups to enable their participation in online meetings. This was used to extend the reach of engagement on the COVID-19 pandemic response.

Employability

Due to the introduction of restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Employment Team has had to adapt its methods of engagement. At the same time, in part because of the introduction of new services funded by SG to help mitigate socio-economic impacts of COVID, the number of contracts the Employability Team is delivering has expanded, increasing the range of information that needs to be communicated to relevant groups. See section 4.1 for more details.

Caring for People

The Caring for People response to Covid-19 provided welfare/health and wellbeing support and signposting to vulnerable members of the community during Lockdown period and for the Test and Protect response.

Community Food

During the first lockdown, the Scottish Government identified ensuring access to food and the prevention of hunger to be a national priority. Policy focused on providing support to access food for:

- The Shielding;
- Vulnerable (elderly, disabled, economically disadvantaged);
- Free School meal households
- Individuals living in very remote rural areas.

To this end, the Scottish Government created a fund to be used by local authorities to support access to food and supplement measures put in place by central government.

The Council had no ready network or template for the mass delivery of food parcels. Therefore, we had to quickly develop a new service to enable this.

The food parcel service was promoted widely by the council, HSCP, third sector and word of mouth/social media. Across the project's life, the demand for food parcels grew.

The project distributed Fresh and Ambient food parcels across all of Argyll and Bute including to our Islands. Overcoming the logistical challenges of distributing parcels over the wide and varied geographic spread the council area was key to the project's success.

- Food parcels were tailored to different groups:
- Fresh Food Parcels to those who were shielding. These supplemented the ambient parcels from the Scottish Government and made sure that nutritional requirements were met in a holistic manner.
- Fresh and Ambient Food Parcels to Vulnerable residents (including Free School meals households until the summer vacation, at which point provision switched to vouchers). The combined fresh and ambient food parcels ensured that those identified as being vulnerable had their nutritional and sanitary needs met.
- Frozen Meals to those Shielding and Vulnerable who lacked the ability to prepare meals for themselves.

Specific dietary requirements, because of health conditions or religion/belief, and variations were also taken into account, with individual options prepared accordingly.

Over the course of the project, from March 2020 to the projects close in August 2020, the Community Food project delivered over 45,000 food parcels across the Council area.

One point of learning from the project was that it highlighted previously unknown areas of deprivation. The information thus gathered may be used to inform future projects and engagement activities.

During the first COVID lockdown, Education prepared a recovery plan ([Microsoft Word - Recovery Planning - AB 013 Landscape \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](#)). This includes information with regard to arrangements for:

- Free school meals;
- Arrangements for key worker and vulnerable pupils;
- Distribution of digital devices and dongles.

Schools' responses to COVID: examples from Dunoon Grammar School

Even before COVID, Dunoon Grammar School had identified a large increase in the number of pupils requiring support for anxiety related issues leading to non-attendance, school refusal, self-harming and mental health difficulties. Due to Covid-19, some of these issues have become more evident in our young people. The HUB has had significant impact on improving attendance, reducing exclusions and referrals and improving relationships between young people and staff at DGS.

The school has a Pride Group, which has been running since around 2017. The group meets at lunchtime, once per week and provides a safe space for LGBT pupils and allies. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, the Pride group has been split into a Senior and Junior group. The group has led activities to help raise awareness of the issues facing our LGBT community. During the school closure period, pupils continue to have access to the group, via google classroom.

Due to Covid-19, DGS has organised and held two authority wide virtual events for young people in order to raise aspirations. Our Virtual UCAS showcase in June 2020 allowed a range of Scottish Universities and Colleges to interact with hundreds of young people in A&B in order to answer questions and inspire them to apply to their institutions. Our 'I Can Do Anything Day' in Feb 2021 targeted S2 pupils and gave them further information from a range of careers and industries in order to help them prepare for option choices in both S3 and for their future career pathways.

Argyll and Bute Recovery Action Plan:

During the initial incident/response phase of the COVID pandemic, the Council developed and agreed its recovery strategy and framework.

The Framework sets out the role the Council has in leading the recovery process, although recovery can only be delivered in co-operation with partner agencies, third, private and voluntary sectors, and local communities.

Subsequently, the Argyll and Bute Recovery Action Plan was developed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic was submitted to Committee for consideration and approval in December 2020 ([Argyll and Bute Recovery Action Plan Appendix.pdf \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](#).) The plan details specific actions and priorities for all agencies and communities.

We recognise that the recovery process is complex, and our recovery plans need to be flexible to deal with the evolving COVID-19 situation and associated restrictions and responses.

One of the challenges we face in recovering from the pandemic, and which has been recognised in the plan, are the levels of inequality in our communities, which have

been exacerbated by the pandemic. These inequalities have impacts on the health, education and quality of life for an increasing number of people.

The Recovery Action Plan has been impact assessed using our EqSEIA process, and a commitment has been made to ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Moreover, as current situation is fluid and subject to change, the Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment will be kept under regular review.

Section 4: Equality Outcomes (2019-2023)

4.1 Argyll and Bute's Equality Outcomes (2019-2023)

The Council, Education Authority and Licensing Board have developed new Equality Outcomes for the period 2019-2023. These are set out in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Equality Outcomes (2019-2023).

	Education Authority	Rest of Council	Licensing Board
Workforce	We support our workforce, encouraging participation across all age groups		
	We promote diversity across occupational groups		
Engagement	We have improved engagement with protected groups		
Services	People with protected characteristics have improved experiences of services		
	We take the views of people from protected groups into account when we change our services		
Education	We do not tolerate bullying and harassment of people from protected groups		
	The gap in educational attainment between people with and without protected characteristics is reduced.		

Workforce:

We support our workforce, encouraging participation across all age groups

Duty: Advance equality of opportunity

Protected characteristics: All, with particular attention to age

Purpose: We believe that all employees, including those from all the protected characteristics, should be encouraged, and have equal opportunity, to participate fully within the workforce. This principle is set out in the council's Equality and Diversity Policy.

We recognise that the Council, in common with the population of Argyll and Bute more widely, has particular issues and risks relating to the age of our workforce. This is why this outcome emphasises age.

We actively encourage young people to join our workforce, to provide long-term opportunities for them in our area and to create our workforce for the future.

Modern apprentices

In the past two financial years (2019/20 and 2020/21) we have employed eight modern apprentices across a variety of subject areas. These apprentices are continuing to work through their qualification, with the exception of one, who has moved onto employment with the council.

Over the same period, twelve apprentices who had started in previous years completed apprenticeships. All twelve went into positive destinations, either employment or further education. Eight went onto secure a post with Argyll and Bute Council on completion of their apprenticeship.

Since starting our apprenticeship programme in 2014, the Council has offered 61 apprenticeship opportunities. Of these 77% have secured employment with the council.

Young Person's Guarantee

The aim of the Young Person's Guarantee is to deliver fairer and more inclusive communities where every young person has an opportunity to reach their potential.

Young people entitled to support through this fund are:

- Unemployed (excluding those in full time education);
- About to leave school without a positive destination;
- School leavers without a positive destination;
- In low paid employment;
- At risk of redundancy;
- At risk of losing an apprenticeship;
- Leaving training, volunteering, college or university without a positive destination;
- Low-skilled;
- Without qualifications at SCQF 5 or above; or
- Underemployed.

Argyll and Bute Council has been able to offer four opportunities under the young person's guarantee. These have been selected in areas where there are most likely to be roles available on completion of the apprenticeship; this increases the likelihood of the scheme's participants of securing employment.

Information for applicants

The Council will in the next six months be reviewing the information it provides to job applicants to ensure that it encourages greater inclusivity. The information provided on the My Job Scotland / Talentlink landing pages will also be reviewed and updated.

We promote diversity across occupational groups

Duty: Advance equality of opportunity

Protected characteristics: All, with particular emphasis on sex

Purpose: The Council has a highly segregated workforce in some types of job. For example, people working in home care are 99% female. By contrast, employees in Roads and Amenities and IT are predominantly male. We aim to widen opportunity for people in job roles that they may not have considered otherwise and create opportunity for all.

The Council wishes to challenge stereotypes. Internally, this is done through the six-monthly workforce planning discussions with Third Tier Managers. Employees in non-traditional roles have also been highlighted in one of the Chief Executive's podcasts, wherein she had a conversation with the council's first female mechanic and the Fleet Services Performance Manager to discuss their roles in the Council's Fleet Services.

The Council will in the next six months be reviewing the information it provides to job applicants to ensure that it encourages greater inclusivity. The information provided on the My Job Scotland / Talentlink landing pages will also be reviewed and updated.

Engagement:

We have improved engagement with protected groups

Duty: Foster good relations

Protected characteristics: All

Purpose: We aim to make sure the voices and opinions of people from protected groups are heard when we engage with our service users. This is particularly important when people from particular protected groups may have different experiences or needs and whose voices may not be heard so clearly.

To enable better communication, internally we have:

- Plain English guidance (available on the Council's intranet);
- Guidance on how to carry out consultations;
- Guidance around non-discriminatory advertising;
- Plain English e-learning course available to all networked staff;

For people wishing to contact the council, we offer:

- Materials in a range of formats;
- BrowseAloud on the Council's website. BrowseAloud reads the website out and translates written webpages into other languages;
- ContactBSL;
- A contract with Language Line for translation services. (Contact information is available to staff on the Hub. All environmental health officers carry cards to enable use of this service in their wallets.)
- The public the ability to contact the council's Customer Service Centre in a range of ways including telephone, email, and private messaging via social media.

- Access to mobile hearing loops for events.

We can demonstrate examples of good practice in how we engage with various groups.

Community Planning:

We encourage the active involvement of young people in Community Planning. Meetings are held to support young people onto the Area Community Planning Groups in local areas, and two places for young people were created on the Community Planning Partnership Management Committee. These are occupied by Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament in Argyll and Bute.

Other Community Planning and Community Development activities have included:

- Outreach to equalities groups during pandemic recovery/ resilience consultation to gain the views of those most negatively impacted. This work contributed to the Scottish Government's Social Renewal Advisory Board.
- Provision of digital support to community groups to enable their participation in online meetings, and in online engagement tools such as the CONSUL digital participation platform. This was used to extend the reach of engagement on the COVID-19 pandemic response.
- Provision of large text and reader accessible application forms for the council's annual Supporting Communities Fund.
- Purchase of equipment to better support the needs of people with hearing loss to participate in training sessions. Following identification of need, from delivery of a training session with community members, mobile hearing loop equipment was purchased to allow for those with hearing impairment to participate in face to face training. (This also contributes to improved experiences of services).
- All online documents are now checked to be accessible to screen readers and other assistive technology (This also contributes to improved experiences of services).

Employability:

The Council's Employability Team are proactive in trying to target groups eligible for assistance under the various contracts they deliver. Currently, these include:

- **Fair Start Scotland** (Service is targeted at those who wish to receive individually tailored support to find and remain in employment or self-employment)
- **Employability Fund** (Respond to the different needs of each individual, age 16 to 67 while also adapting to employer demands on a local basis. This contract is currently on hold as it has not been feasible to deliver due to the pandemic.)

- **No One Left Behind** (encompasses Argyll and Bute Employer Recruitment and Training Incentive; The Young Person's Guarantee; Partnership Action for Continuing Employment. All local authorities receive an allocation to deliver more effective and joined-up employability support across Scotland; various eligibility criteria apply for different funding streams.)
- **Parental Employability Support Fund** (6 target groups: Lone Parents; parents with disabilities; three or more children; minority ethnic families; youngest child under 1 year; parents age 25 years and less. The service aims to prevent and mitigate the impact of child poverty as outlined in the Argyll and Bute Child Poverty Action Plan.)
- **Kickstart Scheme** (provides funding to create new, six month job placements for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit who are at risk of long term unemployment.)

The Council's Employability Team have used a range of methods to engage with a wide a range of groups and encourage referrals/signups of Argyll and Bute residents.

All contracts are/will be marketed on the council's website <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/helping-people-work>. Regular Facebook and Tweets are also posted with the help of the Communications Team.

Prior to the COVID pandemic, engagement was achieved through:

Fair Start Scotland

- Leaflet added to 2018/2019 annual Council Tax bills
- Popup stands located permanently in each Job Centre Plus office.
- Popup stands in each of the main town moved about fortnightly; service points, housing offices, doctors' surgeries, libraries, etc.
- Posters and leaflets distributed across the whole delivery area to doctors' surgeries, dentists, Live Argyll premises, foodbanks, supermarkets, community halls, etc.
- Physical presence in Live Argyll premises, supermarkets to hand out leaflets to members of the public.
- Regular engagement with Jobcentre plus, Skills Development Scotland, other council departments such as Social Work, Welfare Rights and Housing.
- Attendance at weekly job clubs.
- Attendance at Argyll and Bute Employability Partnership meetings.

Employability Fund / Argyll and Bute Employer Recruitment and Training Incentive (ABERTI).

- Physical presence in Live Argyll premises, supermarkets to hand out leaflets to members of the public.
- Attendance at weekly job clubs.
- Attendance at Argyll and Bute Employability Partnership meetings.

Due to the introduction of restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Employment Team has had to adapt its methods of engagement. At the same time, the number of contracts the Employability Team is delivering has expanded, increasing the range of information that needs to be communicated to relevant groups.

During COVID for Fair Start Scotland

- Posters sent out again to all foodbanks in the area with a request that the posters be displayed in their premises.
- Fair Start Scotland has been included in the Council's Weekly News Roundup on various occasions. (The Council's Weekly News Roundup is currently circulated to upwards of 4,000 individuals who have signed up to receive it.)
- The Council's Communications Team issued a press release to over 150 local media contacts across Argyll and Bute, including Campbeltown Courier, Helensburgh Advertiser, Oban Times, Dunoon Observer, Argyll FM, Oban FM, the Lochside Press, BBC Alba, etc.
- Promotion email sent to all Practice Managers within GP surgeries.
- Regular engagement with Jobcentre plus, Skills Development Scotland, other council departments such as Social Work, Welfare Rights and Housing.
- Popup stands located permanently in each Job Centre Plus office.

During COVID for Parental Employability Support Fund

- Posters sent out again to all foodbanks in the area with a request that the posters be displayed in their premises.
- Survey issued via Xpressions app to all parents of primary and secondary school children.
- Engagement with DWP, ELC, Primary Schools, Nurseries, Argyll College, Digital Connections, Business Gateway, Skills Development Scotland, Third Sector Interface (TSI), Citizens Advice, Welfare Rights, Home-Start, Live Argyll, Social Work, voluntary organisations, Carr Gomm and the NHS.
- Attendance at Argyll and Bute Child Poverty Action Group meetings.

During COVID for all services

- Regular engagement with all Skills Development Scotland and DWP/Job Centre Plus offices
- Attendance at a Skills Development Scotland full team meeting to highlight services on offer to the young people they support.
- Attendance by Keyworkers at DWP's weekly virtual hub to promote service to the unemployed who are participating.
- Attendance at Argyll and Bute Employability Partnership meetings.

Education:

The Educational Psychology Service has engaged with the Chair of Oban Pride and link for Argyll and Bute schools to consider the ways in which education services can better understand and respond to the needs of children and young people who identify as LGBTQ+. There have also been discussions with social work managers to consider support for care experienced young people identifying as LGBTQ+.

Services:

People with protected characteristics have improved experiences of services

Duty: Advance equality of opportunity; foster good relations

Protected characteristics: All

Purpose: We aim to make sure that, as far as possible, our services meet the needs and aspirations of people from protected groups and that we work to improve their experience of our services.

Website accessibility

To ensure easier access to services, considerable work has been done to ensure the Website's Accessibility Standards have been improved to ensure we conform to *the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018* that required compliance by Sept 2020. As of March 2021:

- Our SOCITM Silktide Accessibility rating is 97 out of 100
- Argyll and Bute Council ranks 12th out of 401 UK local authority websites.
- Argyll and Bute has the third highest ranking of Scottish Local Authorities.

(See also section 2.4.)

We have renewed our contract with BrowseAloud to provide additional web support such as reading aloud of web pages for those with sight related issues and new enhanced translation capability for users.

Caring for People response to COVID:

We have provided welfare/health and wellbeing support and signposting to vulnerable members of the community during Lockdown period and subsequently for Test and Protect response. See also section 3.

Syrian Refugees:

Inviting Syrian refugee families, living on Bute, to evaluate the support they receive enables us to review the resettlement programme in relation to the support and advice provided under the following headings:

- Learning English;
- Welfare support;
- Employability and entrepreneurialism;
- Education;
- Housing;

- Health;
- Understanding the law;
- Cultural, social and leisure activities;
- Feeling safe.

We are also able to compare scores from previous year and ensure we develop policies and strategies informed by our families to meet their needs as they become less dependent on support and more integrated into their new communities.

Education

As a result of the vulnerabilities for LGBTQ+ young people, mental health recovery funding has been directed towards ensuring that the views of children and young people inform service developments.

We take the views of people from protected groups into account when we change our services.

Duty: Advance equality of opportunity; foster good relations

Protected characteristics: All

Purpose: We aim to make sure that the needs and opinions of people from protected groups are taken into account when we make changes to the way we deliver our services. This helps us to make sure that people with one or more protected characteristics have equal opportunity to access the services we provide as those who do not share a protected characteristic.

We consult with service users about changes that will affect them. Guidance is available on the council's intranet. Advice is also available from the council's Research and Engagement Officer.

We require that an EqSEIA is completed when service redesign takes place. We aim to demonstrate that consultation with protected groups has taken place, and that due regard has been paid when proposals are developed and decisions made.

Examples of recent activity where view have been gathered and taken into account include:

Child Poverty Action Plan:

The Council / Education Authority produced versions of the draft plan tailored to primary age children and to young people. These tailored documents ensured that the voices of children and young people were more effectively heard during the consultation on the plan's content.

We recognise that we can learn from these kinds of examples and we wish to make sure that they become the norm.

Customer Service Engagement Survey:

The post Lockdown Customer Service Engagement Survey, which looked at how people wish to engage with the council, to ensure that we tailor channels of communication to meet user needs, made particular efforts to ensure Hard to Reach Groups. This was to make sure that their views were captured and reflected.

Children and Young People's Service Plan:

Accessing the views of young people is central to the delivery of Children and Young People's Service Plan, including taking account of those from protected groups. This was progressed through the Young People's Advisory Panel.

Education:

We do not tolerate bullying and harassment of people from protected groups

Duty: Foster good relations; eliminate discrimination

Protected characteristics: All

Purpose: As part of wider work to tackle bullying in schools, we will take action to reduce bullying on the basis of one or more of the protected characteristics.

As part of this work, actions will be carried out to make sure that there is an ethos of LGBTI inclusion in all education establishments, with participation and positive relationships across the whole community of learners. All educational establishments will take effective action to prevent and tackle homo-, bi- and transphobic bullying, and anti-LGBTI prejudice, building a positive and safe culture, and to help parents and wider communities understand the value of LGBTI inclusive education.

The Council

The council's Wellbeing team included an item to raise awareness of International Stand Up to Bullying Day 2021 in its weekly 'newsletter' ([Wellbeing Wednesday - 24th February 2021 \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](#)). Links to the newsletters, which are available on the Council's external website, along with teasers relating to the current week's content, are emailed to all networked staff.

The same newsletter included information reminding staff of the council's policy position with regard to bullying: 'As an employer, the Council has a zero tolerance approach to bullying', and signposted staff to the council's Dignity at Work policy and procedure, which provides information and advice on dealing with bullying and harassment in the workplace, and where to get support.

Since January, 2021, council employees who work within the Health and Social Care Partnership have also been able to access the independent and confidential Guardian Service. The Guardian Service is independent, external and strictly confidential, and enables staff to discuss matters relating to service user care and safety, whistleblowing, bullying and harassment and workplace grievances.

In 2020, an independent and confidential Guardian Service

(www.theguardianservice.co.uk) was launched for NHS Highland staff, including those working in Argyll and Bute. This Guardian Service was extended from 1 January 2021 to cover Argyll and Bute Council staff working for Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership.

The Guardian Service is independent and confidential, and enables staff to discuss matters relating to patient and service user care and safety, whistleblowing, bullying and harassment, and workplace grievances.

Information with regard to how employees can access the Guardian Service is available on the Council's intranet, and has been circulated via emails, leaflets and fliers delivered to HSCP premises across the area.

The Education Authority

The Education Authority has a detailed equality, diversity and inclusion policy and has a school improvement priority to engage with our community, once the COVID pandemic is over, to carry out a curriculum review to ensure learners can:

- explore diversity and multi-faith issues, and;
- challenge racism and religious intolerance in a progressive and well-planned way.

There is a clear strategy in place for the next year or so to implement this.

Dunoon Grammar School

Dunoon Grammar School is part of the Mentors in Violence Prevention Scheme. This is a peer education and leadership programme where our senior pupils deliver workshops to younger peers on topics such as group chats, sexting, domestic abuse, knife crime and homophobic bullying. This is a violence prevention and anti-bullying programme that looks at gender stereotypes and how they impact on our behaviour and relationships. We hope that over time it promotes healthy relationships, and safer schools and communities.

Following consultation with young people, parents, colleagues and partners, the whole school anti-bullying policy has been reviewed and updated. The new policy acknowledges the national definition of bullying and highlights the impact of bullying particularly on those young people with protected characteristics. A draft version of the policy was shared with young people and staff via house time activities, where it was updated further to include comments by pupils. Our policy sets out clearly the support provided to young people who are experiencing bullying behaviour.

The gap in educational attainment between people with and without protected characteristics is reduced.

Duty: Advance equality of opportunity

Protected characteristics: All

Purpose: We work to provide a high standard of education to all pupils, and we want to reduce gaps in attainment between people with, and without, protected characteristics. This will help us to advance equality of opportunity for young people who share one or more of the protected characteristics.

All education establishments routinely discuss and report on the attainment by sex and of looked after children.

A range of initiatives and activities are in place to support pupils and reduce gaps in educational attainment.

Examples from Dunoon Grammar School and Oban High School are outlined below. Similar activities take place in the other schools within our area.

Dunoon Grammar School

Dunoon Grammar School (DGS) works closely with its Local Young Carers organisation, Crossroads Young Carers. Young carers help to look after family members with a disability, a mental health condition, an illness, or a drug or alcohol problem. Young carers are given time in school where they can meet with the Young Carers Team.

DGS has a number of young people with significant and complex additional support needs who attend Junior and Senior learning centres. They follow individualised curricula to maximise their learning experiences and meet their needs.

The HUB—a large, flexible space within DGS—is staffed at all times by at least one full time support teacher. It offers a range of measures to support pupils of all ages with barriers to their learning such as mental health difficulties, social and behavioural difficulties and trauma. Working together with the pupils, their mainstream teachers, parents and other appropriate agencies, the HUB offers pupils a safe, nurturing and encouraging learning space and provides an additional level of support to ensure all pupils continue to make progress. This can be in the form of supported catch up work, delivering alternative courses in core skills such as maths and literacy, creative projects to build resilience and help with engagement as well as signposting and supporting pupils to access other specialist services.

Dunoon Grammar School promises learners to listen to them, be ambitious for them, help them and look to the future with them. The promise focuses on interventions in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing and supports a broader range of initiatives and programmes to ensure that all learners reach their full potential. This includes universal and targeted support. Whole school nurturing approaches have been adopted to support positive relationships between staff and learners.

Throughout their learning journey pupils may need additional or targeted support, tailored to their individual circumstances. Barriers to learning may arise from specific learning difficulties, disability, social, emotional or behavioural needs, bereavement or family issues. Additional support may also be required to ensure progress in learning for the gifted and able, looked after children and young people, young carers, Gypsies and Travellers, asylum seekers and those for whom English is not a first language.

Dunoon Grammar School has been developing robust implementation of Flexible Learning Plans in order to meet the needs of all learners.

DGS has further developed partnership with the local Community and Learning Development team in order to identify pupils who may require extra support or enhanced timetables to develop their skills in preparation for post school transition. CLD has agreed to work with identified pupils through SQA awards (leadership) as

well as develop essential life skills either as part of a pupil's existing timetable or in addition. This can provide effective support and potential further links to education and employment with the 'no one left behind' programme for school leavers, providing additional support to young people who may be in danger of not entering into a positive post school destination.

Oban High School

As an example of initiatives taken to reduce the attainment gap, Oban High School provide a number of intervention strategies to support its pupils. These include:

- Picking up pupils in morning to improve attendance;
- Extra adult point of contact/touching base regularly;
- One-to-one work on social skills, confidence, bullying, resilience, behaviour, bereavement, anxiety, self-esteem;
- Small group sessions;
- Accompanying anxious pupils to class or with assessments;
- Support with homework;
- Outreach sessions;
- Advocating for child with teachers and at planning meetings;
- Support for parents both in school but also through home visits;
- Help with personal care issues;
- Ensuring pupils have appropriate clothing/footwear/toiletries;
- Developing confidence through learning to swim;
- Small group gym sessions;
- Girls Gym Club;
- Friday night boys youth club (VIF);
- Coffee and Chat (early intervention);
- Positive Parenting Classes.

The OHS staff work closely with guidance staff to ensure the best outcomes for its pupils and regularly attend Child Planning Meetings to support pupils to plan for their future. In addition, if necessary pupils are accompanied to G.P appointments, and there is a great deal of liaison between the school, health, and social work departments.

Section 6: Workforce Monitoring

6.1 Our workforce

On the basis of the data we currently hold, along with a comparison with other data, we can make the following comments with regard to the workforce:

- The most obvious difference between the workforce profile and working-age population of the area more general relates to the high proportion of females

(approximately three-quarters) within the council and Education workforces. The predominance of females is particularly noticeable in Education.

- With regard to marital status: on the basis of the Census data from 2011, we might expect a little over a third of our workforce to be single. Even allowing for the large amount of missing data, the low figures of 'single' and 'not married' within the workforce appear out of sync with the wider population.
- When compared to the age profile of the wider working-age population (NRS 2019 Mid-Year Estimates), our workforce appears to be broadly in line with what might be expected. Our workforce shows a lower percentage of people aged 16-24; however, this is not unexpected as this cohort covers the final year of secondary education and the period when many people go on to higher education. This gap is offset in the 35-54 year age groups, where the proportion of the workforce in these cohorts is higher than in the wider population. The proportions of the workforce in the 25-34 and 55-64 year ages cohorts is in line with the wider population. It should be noted that the age profile reflects the ageing of Argyll and Bute's population more widely.
- It is hard to make comparisons between 2011 Census data and our workforce data with regard to sex, disability and religion because of the high proportion of missing data and 'prefer not to say' within the workforce data.
- Limited information is available about sexual orientation. Data from 2019 ([Scottish Surveys Core Questions 2019](#)) suggested that around 95% of Scottish adults identified as being heterosexual / straight (94.5% \pm 4.7% in Argyll and Bute). On this basis, we would expect proportions of staff identifying as LGB to be low. Because of the amount of missing data, and the small numbers involved, no conclusions can be drawn with regard to under / overrepresentation of LGB people within our workforce.

Three separate strands of activity are currently underway with regard to how we monitor and manage our workforce. These relate to:

- Review of workforce data we are required to report under equality legislation
- Workforce planning
- Health of the organisation reporting.

These are considered in more detail below.

6.2 Review of workforce data

In 2018, we reviewed the equalities-related data we hold for our workforce. We also reviewed the data collected by Talentlink, our recruitment portal. This highlighted a number of issues relating to the quality and consistency of the monitoring data available to us. Although we have identified actions to improve these data, progress towards implementing these has been slow.

Data reported comes from two main sources:

- Internally held administrative data, held in our HR and payroll database, Resourcelink;

- Data collected via Talentlink as part of the online recruitment process.

Both of these sources rely on individuals to voluntarily submit equalities information.

When considering the data relating out our workforce, the following points need to be borne in mind:

- We currently hold complete equalities information for a minority of employees. For some protected characteristics, we have information for only a quarter of the workforce; this is due to missing data or individuals stating that they would prefer not to disclose information. (See for example data relating to sexual orientation, and religion and belief.)
- Resourcelink contains inconsistent information. Long serving members of staff may have equalities information that use obsolete data categories. This means that we have conflicting and overlapping categories in the system.
- Resourcelink and Talentlink use different categories for equal opportunities monitoring. This means that the two sets of data are not directly comparable.
- The information in Talentlink is collected using overlapping categories, which makes analysis difficult.
- We have identified issues relating to our data collection processes as well as a lack of documentation with regard to how data reports should be generated and the data interpreted.

In light of these issues, we have developed a series of actions to improve data quality in future years.

We will:

- Continue to lobby and liaise with CoSLA to improve the data categories used in Talentlink. This will be of benefit to all users of the system, not just to Argyll and Bute.
- When data categories are confirmed for Talentlink, we will work to align these and categories used in Resourcelink.
- We will carry out another campaign to encourage employees to update their equalities data. This will hopefully increase the amount of data we hold and reduce the number of 'legacy' categories within the dataset.
- We will produce documentation detailing exactly how the data are to be extracted from the system and the methods used to analyse them. This will ensure that data are more consistent over time, and changes in personnel will not cause data discontinuities.

The data, itself, is reported in Appendix 2.

6.3 Workforce Planning and Health of the Organisation reporting

In 2018 the Council approved a Strategic Workforce Plan, and put in place a programme of workforce planning activity. Included in this has been team profiling across the council. All third tier managers have been supplied with data highlighting the proportions of their staff aged 50 and over, and under 25. They have also been provided with information relating to the male / female split in their workforce.

The six-monthly interview sessions between Talent Management officers and Third Tier Managers are now embedded. During these sessions, potential issues are highlighted, and managers are asked to develop actions to address them. Issues include areas where gender segregation may be a particular challenge to the organisation. In turn, this helps to deliver on our outcome, *We promote diversity across occupational groups*.

The Council also has procedures in place to monitor the 'Health of the Organisation'. This is designed to enable better monitoring of issues and changes in the workforce, and for interventions to be made in a timely manner.

Appendix 1: Employment Data

A1.1. Workforce Profile

Data source: Internal HR system (Resourcelink)

Because of the small numbers involved in the more detailed ethnicity categories, data have been aggregated for reporting purposes and figures have been rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

Employees with long service may have supplied Equal Opportunities data when previous data categories were used. These legacy categories persist in our records. One of these categories is 'White'; this cannot be broken down into any of the more detailed categories that are currently in use. For this reason, all subcategories of 'white' have been aggregated together for reporting purposes.

(Note that 'other white ethnic group' is included in Ethnic minority. However, 'white -- any other' is included under 'white'. Because of the small numbers involved, this has a negligible impact on the overall results.)

The workforce profile data are presented under three headings:

- ALL: includes all staff employed by the council, including in Education
- EDUCATION: includes employees within the Education Services. This includes non-teaching and teaching staff.
- OTHER: employees of the council excluding Education.

Some employees hold more than one post within the council. For equality reporting purposes, we have been looked at employees of the Council, not posts. Where possible, duplicate sets of equalities data have been removed from the dataset. However, where employees hold posts in Education and another Service, their equalities data is included in both sets of figures. As a result, the total number of staff reported in EDUCATION and OTHER sum to a total greater than that recorded in ALL.

RACE

Year ending 31 March 2019

RACE	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Ethnic minority	1%	1%	1%
White	62%	65%	60%
Unknown/prefer not to say	37%	35%	39%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>4372</i>	<i>1964</i>	<i>2458</i>

Year ending 31 March 2020

RACE	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Ethnic minority	1%	1%	1%
White	59%	61%	59%

RACE	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Unknown/prefer not to say	40%	38%	40%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>4400</i>	<i>2039</i>	<i>2413</i>

SEX

Year ending 31 March 2019

SEX	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Male	26%	17%	34%
Female	74%	83%	66%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>4372</i>	<i>1964</i>	<i>2458</i>

Year ending 31 March 2020

SEX	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Male	26%	17%	33%
Female	74%	83%	67%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>4400</i>	<i>2039</i>	<i>2413</i>

DISABILITY

Year ending 31 March 2019

DISABILITY	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Yes	1%	1%	2%
No	46%	47%	47%
Unknown	52%	52%	52%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>4372</i>	<i>1964</i>	<i>2458</i>

Year ending 31 March 2020

DISABILITY	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Yes	2%	1%	2%
No	45%	44%	47%
Unknown	53%	55%	52%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>4400</i>	<i>2039</i>	<i>2413</i>

AGE

Year ending 31 March 2019

AGE	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
16-24	3%	4%	3%
25-34	14%	18%	11%
35-44	21%	24%	18%
45-54	32%	30%	34%
55-64	26%	23%	29%
65-74	4%	2%	5%
75-84	0%	0%	0%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>4372</i>	<i>1964</i>	<i>2458</i>

Year ending 31 March 2020

AGE	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
16-24	3%	4%	3%
25-34	14%	17%	11%
35-44	21%	25%	18%
45-54	31%	29%	33%
55-64	27%	23%	30%
65-74	4%	2%	5%
75-84	0%	0%	0%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>4400</i>	<i>2039</i>	<i>2413</i>

The mean age of the workforce for both 2019 and 2020 was 47 years.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Year ending 31 March 2019

SEXUAL ORIENTATION	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Bisexual	0%	0%	0%
Gay	0%	0%	0%
Heterosexual/straight	25%	23%	27%
Lesbian	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to say/unknown	75%	77%	73%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>4372</i>	<i>1964</i>	<i>2458</i>

Year ending 31 March 2020

SEXUAL ORIENTATION	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Bisexual	0%	0%	0%
Gay	0%	0%	0%
Heterosexual/straight	26%	23%	28%
Lesbian	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to say/unknown	74%	76%	71%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>4400</i>	<i>2039</i>	<i>2413</i>

MARITAL STATUS

Year ending 31 March 2019

MARITAL STATUS	All	Education	Other
Divorced	1%	1%	1%
Divorced/Separated	0%	0%	0%
Separated	1%	1%	1%
Living with partner	3%	3%	4%
Marriage/Civil Partnership	32%	31%	32%
Single	5%	5%	5%
Widowed	1%	0%	1%
Not Married	9%	9%	10%
Prefer not to say/unknown	49%	51%	47%
<i>Number of employees</i>	<i>4372</i>	<i>1963</i>	<i>2460</i>

Year ending 31 March 2020

MARITAL STATUS	All	Education	Other
Divorced	1%	1%	1%
Divorced/Separated	0%	0%	0%
Separated	1%	1%	1%
Living with partner	3%	3%	4%
Marriage/Civil Partnership	31%	30%	32%
Single	5%	5%	5%
Widowed	0%	0%	1%
Not Married	9%	8%	9%
Prefer not to say/unknown	49%	52%	47%
<i>Number of employees</i>	<i>4400</i>	<i>2038</i>	<i>2414</i>

RELIGION AND BELIEF

Year ending 31 March 2019

RELIGION AND BELIEF	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Church of Scotland	12%	11%	13%
Roman Catholic	3%	3%	3%
Other Christian	2%	2%	2%
Buddhist	0%	0%	0%
Hindu	0%	0%	0%
Muslim	0%	0%	0%
Pagan	0%	0%	0%
Sikh	0%	0%	0%
Humanist	0%	0%	0%
Other religion or belief	0%	0%	1%
None	7%	6%	8%
Prefer not to say/unknown	75%	77%	72%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>4372</i>	<i>1964</i>	<i>2458</i>

Year ending 31 March 2020

RELIGION AND BELIEF	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Church of Scotland	13%	11%	14%
Roman Catholic	3%	3%	3%
Other Christian	2%	2%	2%
Buddhist	0%	0%	0%
Hindu	0%	0%	0%
Muslim	0%	0%	0%
Pagan	0%	0%	0%
Sikh	0%	0%	0%
Humanist	0%	0%	0%
Other religion or belief	0%	0%	0%
None	8%	7%	9%
Prefer not to say/unknown	73%	76%	71%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>4400</i>	<i>2039</i>	<i>2413</i>

A1.2 Applications for Employment

Source: this data comes from the recruitment portal (MyJobScotland / Talentlink). There are issues with regard to the equalities categories used in this data. Work is ongoing at CoSLA to make improvements.

Note: the data is based on applications received. If someone has applied for multiple posts, their equality information will be included for every application submitted.

Percentage may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

The applications for employment figures include applications for promoted posts, which are also reported on separately. (See below.)

We have identified issues regarding the way records have been allocated to years. While internal processes have been improved to resolve these issues, they have affected the data for the two years being reported here.

ETHNICITY / RACE

Year ending 31 March 2019

ETHNICITY / RACE	All	Education	Other
White - Scottish	68%	68%	68%
White - Other British/British	18%	19%	17%
White - Irish	1%	0%	1%
White - Eastern European (e.g. Polish)	1%	1%	1%
White - Gypsy/Traveller	0%	0%	0%
White - Other white ethnic group	3%	3%	3%
African - (Inc.Scottish/British)	1%	0%	1%
Asian - Bangladeshi (Inc.Scottish/British)	0%	0%	0%
Asian - Chinese (Inc.Scottish/British)	0%	0%	0%
Asian - Indian (Inc.Scottish/British)	0%	0%	0%
Asian - Pakistani (Inc.Scottish/British)	0%	0%	0%
Asian - Other (Inc.Scottish/British)	0%	0%	0%
Caribbean or Black (Other) - (Inc.Scottish/British)	0%	0%	0%
Other - Arab (Inc.Scottish/British)	0%	0%	1%
Any Mixed or Multiple	1%	1%	1%
Prefer not to answer	1%	2%	1%
Unknown	4%	3%	4%
	99%	99%	99%

Year ending 31 March 2020

ETHNICITY / RACE	All	Education	Other
White - Scottish	64%	60%	67%
White - Other British	15%	17%	14%
White - Irish	1%	1%	1%
White - Eastern European (e.g. Polish)	1%	1%	1%
White - Gypsy/Traveller	0%	0%	0%
White - Other white ethnic group	3%	4%	2%
African - (Inc.Scottish/British)	1%	1%	1%
Asian - Bangladeshi (Inc.Scottish/British)	0%	0%	0%
Asian - Chinese (Inc.Scottish/British)	0%	0%	0%
Asian - Indian (Inc.Scottish/British)	1%	1%	1%
Asian - Pakistani (Inc.Scottish/British)	0%	0%	0%
Asian - Other (Inc.Scottish/British)	0%	0%	0%
Caribbean or Black (Other) - (Inc.Scottish/British)	0%	0%	0%
Other - Arab (Inc.Scottish/British)	0%	0%	1%
Any Mixed or Multiple	1%	1%	1%
Prefer not to answer	1%	1%	2%
Unknown	10%	14%	8%
	99%	100%	99%

The majority of applications come from individuals who identify themselves as white Scottish, with 'white British' forming the second largest category of applicants. This is in line with what we know about the wider demography of the area, where historically much in-migration has come from other parts of the UK, while most outmigration has gone to other parts of Scotland.

NATIONAL IDENTITY

Year ending 31 March 2019

NATIONAL IDENTITY	All	Education	Other
British (including Scottish, English, Welsh, Northern Irish)	88%	89%	87%
Prefer not to answer	1%	1%	1%
Unknown	11%	10%	12%
	100%	100%	100%

Year ending 31 March 2020

NATIONAL IDENTITY	All	Education	Other
British (including Scottish, English, Welsh, Northern Irish)	82%	79%	85%
Prefer not to answer	1%	1%	1%
Unknown	16%	20%	14%
	100%	100%	100%

In year ending 31 March 2019, 60% of applicants identified themselves as being Scottish. The figure for year ending March 2020 was 57%.

MARITAL STATUS

The marital status data is problematic because of overlapping categories caused notably by the inclusion of a 'living with partner' response option. As a result, these data cannot easily be compared with data from other sources (e.g. the Census).

Year ending 31 March 2019

MARITAL STATUS	All	Education	Other
Single	36%	36%	37%
Widowed	1%	1%	1%
Separated	3%	3%	3%
Divorced	5%	5%	6%
Married/Civil Partnership	35%	39%	34%
Living with partner	14%	13%	14%
Prefer not to answer	1%	1%	2%
Unknown	4%	3%	4%
	100%	100%	100%

Year ending 31 March 2020

MARITAL STATUS	All	Education	Other
Single	33%	30%	35%
Widowed	1%	1%	1%
Separated	3%	3%	2%
Divorced	5%	5%	5%
Married/Civil Partnership	33%	34%	33%
Living with partner	14%	12%	15%
Prefer not to answer	2%	2%	2%
Unknown	10%	13%	7%
	100%	100%	100%

RELIGION OR BELIEF

Year ending 31 March 2019

RELIGION OR BELIEF	All	Education	Other
Church of Scotland	20%	18%	20%
Roman Catholic	10%	12%	9%
Other Christian	11%	14%	10%
Buddhist	0%	0%	0%
Hindu	0%	0%	0%
Humanist	1%	1%	1%
Jewish	0%	0%	0%
Muslim	1%	1%	1%
Pagan	0%	0%	0%
Sikh	0%	0%	0%
Other Religion or Belief	1%	1%	2%
Agnostic	0%	0%	0%
None	43%	41%	44%
Prefer not to answer	7%	7%	7%
N/A	5%	4%	6%
	100%	100%	100%

Year ending 31 March 2020

RELIGION OR BELIEF	All	Education	Other
Church of Scotland	18%	18%	19%
Roman Catholic	10%	10%	9%
Other Christian	9%	10%	8%
Buddhist	0%	0%	0%
Hindu	0%	0%	0%
Humanist	1%	1%	1%
Jewish	0%	0%	0%
Muslim	1%	1%	1%
Pagan	0%	0%	0%
Sikh	0%	0%	0%
Other Religion or Belief	1%	1%	1%
Agnostic	0%	0%	0%
None	42%	39%	44%
Prefer not to answer	6%	6%	7%
N/A	11%	15%	9%
	100%	100%	100%

GENDER

It should be noted that the question posed by MyJobScotland explicitly asks about gender. For this reason, the data is reported in this way, even though the protected characteristic is described in the legislation as 'sex'.

Year ending 31 March 2019

GENDER	All	Education	Other
Male	32%	17%	40%
Female	64%	80%	55%
Intersex	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to answer	1%	0%	1%
Unknown	4%	3%	4%
	100%	100%	100%

Year ending 31 March 2020

GENDER	All	Education	Other
Male	32%	17%	41%
Female	58%	69%	52%
Prefer not to answer	1%	1%	1%
Unknown	9%	13%	7%
	100%	100%	100%

The proportion of male applicants for 'other' posts is higher than the proportion of males within the current workforce. Applications for education posts appear to be broadly in line with the current workforce. This pattern has been apparent for at least four consecutive years.

DISABILITY

Year ending 31 March 2019

DISABILITY	All	Education	Other
No	91%	92%	90%
Yes	4%	4%	4%
Prefer not to say	1%	1%	1%
Unknown	4%	3%	4%
	100%	100%	100%

Year ending 31 March 2020

DISABILITY	All	Education	Other
No	85%	82%	87%
Yes	4%	4%	5%
Prefer not to say	1%	1%	1%
Unknown	10%	13%	7%
	100%	100%	100%

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Year ending 31 March 2019

SEXUAL ORIENTATION	All	Education	Other
Bisexual	1%	1%	1%
Gay	1%	1%	1%
Lesbian	0%	0%	0%
Heterosexual/Straight	88%	89%	87%
Other	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to answer	5%	5%	5%
Unknown	5%	3%	6%
	100%	100%	100%

Year ending 31 March 2020

SEXUAL ORIENTATION	All	Education	Other
Bisexual	1%	1%	1%
Gay	1%	0%	1%
Lesbian	0%	0%	0%
Heterosexual/Straight	83%	80%	85%
Other	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to answer	4%	4%	4%
Unknown	10%	14%	8%
	100%	100%	100%

Where percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number this may have led to the apparent 'erasure' of some orientations.

TRANS/TRANGENDER

Year ending 31 March 2019

TRANS	All	Education	Other
No	95%	96%	96%
Yes	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to answer	1%	0%	0%
Unknown	4%	3%	3%
	100%	100%	100%

Year ending 31 March 2020

TRANS	All	Education	Other
No	89%	86%	86%
Yes	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to answer	1%	1%	1%
Unknown	10%	13%	13%
	100%	100%	100%

AGE

Year ending 31 March 2019

AGE	All	Education	Other
15-24	17%	18%	17%
25-34	26%	30%	24%
35-44	22%	24%	21%
45-54	21%	19%	22%
55-64	12%	9%	14%
65-74	1%	0%	1%
75-84	0%	0%	0%
	100%	100%	100%

Year ending 31 March 2020

AGE	All	Education	Other
15-24	13%	13%	13%
25-34	28%	31%	26%
35-44	23%	24%	23%
45-54	22%	20%	23%
55-64	12%	10%	14%
65-74	1%	1%	1%
75-84	0%	0%	0%
	100%	100%	100%

The average age of applicants for whom we have information in 2019 and 2020 was 38. This compared to a mean age of the workforce of 47 years (both 2019 and 2020).

PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY

No questions are asked, and consequently no data collected, with regard to pregnancy or maternity during the recruitment process.

A1.3 Applications for Promotion

Source: this data comes from the recruitment portal (MyJobScotland / Talentlink). There are issues with the equalities data in this dataset, which have been flagged up to CoSLA.

In addition, there have been some issues regarding the way records have been allocated to years (see above), which may explain why the percentage of successful applications for promoted posts appear so low for the year ending 31 March 2021.

Year ending 31 March 2019

Of the applications submitted, 29% came from people already working for the council. Of these:

- 20% were promoted posts.
- 50% were not promoted posts.

- Candidates for the remaining posts did not provide information.

Of the applications we know to relate to promoted posts, a fifth were successful.

Further analysis by protected characteristics has not been carried out.

Year ending 31 March 2020

Of the applications submitted, 11% came from people already working for the council.

Of these:

- 17% were promoted posts.
- 56% were not promoted posts.
- Candidates for the remaining posts did not provide information.

Of the applications we know to relate to promoted posts, a 4% were successful.

Further analysis by protected characteristics has not been carried out.

PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY

No questions are asked, and consequently no data collected, with regard to pregnancy or maternity during the recruitment process.

A1.4 Applications for Training

Source: Resourcelink

Applications for training refers to requests made for training through the Council's PRD (Performance Review and Development) process and refers to training that is offered corporately. Not all staff were eligible for PRDs in the years being reported. Staff may have received training outwith the corporate training framework.

As PRDs only occur once a year, they do not capture information about all training that is offered or delivered. Nor does engagement in the PRD process ensure that training requested has been received.

RACE

Year ending 31 March 2019

RACE	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Ethnic minority	1%	1%	2%
White	62%	64%	60%
Unknown/Prefer not to say	37%	35%	38%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>694</i>	<i>176</i>	<i>519</i>

Year ending 31 March 2020

RACE	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Ethnic minority	2%	1%	2%
White	67%	69%	65%
Unknown/Prefer not to say	32%	30%	32%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>712</i>	<i>296</i>	<i>487</i>

SEX

Year ending 31 March 2019

SEX	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Male	17%	12%	19%
Female	83%	88%	81%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>694</i>	<i>176</i>	<i>519</i>

Year ending 31 March 2020

SEX	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Male	16%	88%	82%
Female	84%	12%	18%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>712</i>	<i>296</i>	<i>487</i>

DISABILITY

Year ending 31 March 2019

DISABILITY	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Yes	1%	0%	1%
No	43%	45%	42%
Unknown	56%	55%	57%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>694</i>	<i>176</i>	<i>519</i>

Year ending 31 March 2020

DISABILITY	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Yes	2%	2%	2%
No	49%	48%	50%
Unknown	49%	50%	48%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>712</i>	<i>296</i>	<i>487</i>

AGE

Year ending 31 March 2019

AGE	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
16-24	4%	6%	3%
25-34	15%	14%	15%
35-44	22%	26%	21%
45-54	35%	35%	35%
55-64	22%	19%	23%
65-74	2%	0%	3%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>694</i>	<i>176</i>	<i>519</i>

Year ending 31 March 2020

AGE	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
16-24	4%	5%	3%
25-34	11%	12%	10%
35-44	23%	24%	22%
45-54	32%	32%	32%
55-64	28%	26%	29%
65-74	3%	0%	3%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>712</i>	<i>296</i>	<i>487</i>

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Year ending 31 March 2019

SEXUAL ORIENTATION	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Bisexual	0%	0%	0%
Gay	0%	0%	0%
Heterosexual/straight	31%	26%	33%
Lesbian	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to say/unknown	69%	74%	67%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>694</i>	<i>176</i>	<i>519</i>

Year ending 31 March 2020

SEXUAL ORIENTATION	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Bisexual	0%	1%	0%
Gay	0%	0%	0%
Heterosexual/straight	32%	31%	32%
Lesbian	0%	0%	0%
Prefer not to say/unknown	68%	68%	67%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>712</i>	<i>296</i>	<i>487</i>

MARITAL STATUS

Not reported.

RELIGION AND BELIEF

Year ending 31 March 2019

RELIGION AND BELIEF	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Church of Scotland	13%	11%	13%
Roman Catholic	3%	4%	3%
Other Christian	3%	3%	3%
Buddhist	0%	0%	0%
Hindu	0%	0%	0%
Muslim	0%	0%	0%
Pagan	0%	0%	1%

RELIGION AND BELIEF	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Sikh	0%	0%	0%
Humanist	0%	0%	1%
Other Religion or Belief	1%	1%	1%
None	10%	8%	10%
Prefer not to say/unknown	69%	73%	68%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>694</i>	<i>176</i>	<i>519</i>

Year ending 31 March 2020

RELIGION AND BELIEF	ALL	EDUCATION	OTHER
Church of Scotland	16%	17%	16%
Roman Catholic	3%	5%	2%
Other Christian	3%	4%	3%
Buddhist	0%	0%	0%
Hindu	0%	0%	0%
Muslim	0%	0%	0%
Pagan	0%	0%	0%
Sikh	0%	0%	0%
Humanist	0%	0%	0%
Other Religion or Belief	0%	0%	1%
None	10%	7%	10%
Prefer not to say/unknown	67%	67%	67%
<i>Total number of employees</i>	<i>712</i>	<i>296</i>	<i>487</i>

A1.5 Employees who are involved in Disciplinary Procedures

Source: information on disciplinaries has been manually extracted from our records. We do not report on whether issues are associated with protected characteristics or whether the individuals involved have protected characteristics.

Disciplinaries

DISCIPLINARIES	Year to 31 March 2019	Year to 31 March 2020	Year to 31 March 2021
Total	17	13	11

Because the numbers are small, the outcomes of the disciplinaries is not provided here.

A1.6 Employees who are involved in Grievance Procedures

Source: information on grievances has been manually extracted from our records. We do not report on whether issues are associated with protected characteristics or whether the individuals involved have protected characteristics.

Grievances

GRIEVANCES	Year to 31 March 2019	Year to 31 March 2020	Year to 31 March 2021
Total	17	27	20

Because the numbers are small, the outcomes of the grievances is not provided here.

A1.7 Employees Leaving the Council

Source: Resourcelink

In each of the years ending 31 March 2019, between 400 and 500 employees left the council. An examination of the equal opportunities data held for these staff suggests no issues with regard to relationships between protected characteristics and reasons for leaving. Key points to note are:

- Overall, leavers are broadly in line with the male/female split of the council's workforce.
- Over half the people how left the council were in the 45-64 year old age group.
- Not surprisingly, retiral as a reason for leaving increases in the 55+ age groups.
- There is no apparent relationship between other reasons for leaving and protected characteristics.

A1.8 Gender Pay Gap

(Source: LGBF draft data 2019/20; CORP 3c -The gender pay gap (%).)

GENDER PAY GAP	2018/19	2019/20
	7.76%	6.83%

The gender pay gap figure reflects the profile of our workforce wherein we have high levels of female employment in lower graded posts. However, we have policies in place, as well as job evaluation procedures, which ensure that equal pay is received for equal work.

A1.9 Policy Statement with regard to Equal Pay:

Argyll and Bute Council is committed to the principle of equal opportunities in employment to ensure that employees are not discriminated against irrespective of their age, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender re-assignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, religion or belief.

Argyll and Bute Council is committed to ensuring that that all staff, irrespective of gender should receive equal pay for the same or broadly similar work, for work rated as equivalent and for work of equal value.

The Council's equal pay objectives are to:

- Eliminate any unfair, unjust or unlawful practices that impact on pay;
- Take appropriate action to address these accordingly;
- Regularly monitor and review the application of policies and procedures and;
- Conduct an equal pay review to monitor existing pay practices in line with the Equality and Human Rights Commission's Equal Pay Statutory Code of Practice.

In order to achieve equal pay for employees, the Council operates a pay system which is transparent, based on clear criteria and free from unlawful bias through the application of the nationally agreed job evaluation scheme and relevant legislation.

For Teachers the Council complies with nationally agreed pay and conditions of service.

Argyll and Bute Council is committed to ensuring equal pay structures for all its employees and will:

- Conduct regular audits to monitor the impact of its pay structure.
- Provide training and guidance for those involved in determining pay
- Respond to grievances on equal pay in accordance with the council's Grievance Policy
- Work in partnership with recognised trade unions to ensure that the Council provides equal pay
- Review progress every 4 years.

A1.10 Equal Pay Audit

Our next equal pay audit will be carried out in 2022.